

You Can Keep  
Your Baby  
Healthy



Your Healthy Baby

CALIFORNIA  
**CHILDREN  
& FAMILIES**  
PARTNERSHIP

A Partnership of the  
California Children & Families Commission  
and the Children & Families County Commissions

# Your Healthy Baby

## Tips To Remember

### Immunize your child:

- Start your baby's shots on time. Keep your child's shots up-to-date.
- Ask the doctor or nurse what to expect after the shot.
- Take your child's shot record with you on every doctor visit.
- Keep your child's shot record in a safe place. You will need it for school and child care.

### Protect your child's teeth:

- Do not let your baby fall asleep with a bottle.
- Wipe or brush your child's teeth every day.
- Start using fluoride toothpaste at age 2.
- Give your child a variety of healthy foods.
- Offer your child water instead of sweet drinks.
- Take your child to the dentist at least once a year.

### Don't smoke around your child:

- It's never too late to quit.
- Never smoke around pregnant women and children.
- Ask friends and family not to smoke in your home or car.

### Protect your baby from SIDS:

- Put your baby to sleep on his or her back.
- Don't place things such as soft stuffed toys, pillows or bumper pads in the crib with your baby.

### Protect your child from too much sun:

- Keep infants out of the sun.
- Apply sunscreen to your children before they go outdoors.



## Keep Your Child Healthy

It is important to be healthy when you are pregnant. That will help you have a healthy baby at birth. Once your baby is born, there are many things you can do to keep him or her happy and healthy.

### This brochure looks at:

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California has two major health coverage programs that offer no cost or low cost medical, dental and vision services for children. For more information, call Healthy Families at **(800) 880-5305** or Medi-Cal at **(888) 747-1222**.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Shots Will Protect Your Baby From Many Diseases

Shots can protect your baby from these dangerous diseases and others:

- Polio
- Whooping cough
- Meningitis
- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Chicken Pox

These diseases can make your baby very ill. Many can cause brain damage or death.

Immunizations are also called:

- Baby shots
- Shots
- Boosters
- Vaccinations
- Vaccines



## Protect Your Child: Get Your Baby's Shots On Time, Every Time

**Keep your baby's record card.**

Your doctor or clinic will give you a record of your child's shots. It is called the California Immunization Record or Yellow Card.

- Keep the Yellow Card updated until your child grows up.
- Take it with you to doctor visits.
- The doctor or nurse will write in the shots they gave.
- The doctor or nurse will also mark when the shots are due.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Make Sure Your Baby Gets All The Shots He Or She Needs

- Start your baby's shots on time.
- Make sure your child stays on schedule.
- Read all the information you get about the shots.

If you have any questions or concerns about your baby's shots, talk to your doctor, clinic or call the local health department.

### When your child gets a shot, you can help.

Here's what you can do:

- Stay calm yourself.
- Talk in a soothing voice or sing.
- Hold your child.
- Bring a toy or blanket your child likes.
- Let your child cry. It's OK for your child to cry when he or she is scared or hurt.

### Shots can sometimes make your child:

- Have a fever.
- Be cranky.
- Have a sore arm or leg.

Ask your doctor or nurse about what to watch out for after your child gets a shot.

## Keep Your Child's Teeth And Gums Healthy

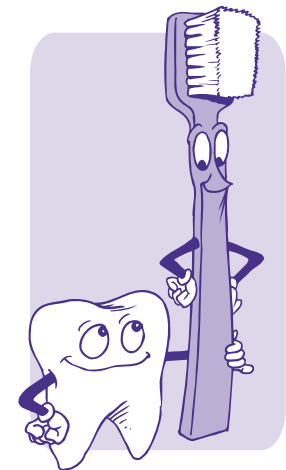
### Your child's teeth and gums are important.

Teeth are needed for chewing, talking and smiling. Baby teeth need to stay healthy even though they will be lost. They hold space for straight and healthy permanent teeth.

### Tooth decay is a common problem, even for babies!

If your child has tooth decay, your child may:

- Cry for long hours.
- Have painful toothaches.
- Have a poor appetite and a hard time chewing.
- Have trouble speaking.
- Get black teeth.



# Your Healthy Baby



## Make Sure Your Own Teeth And Mouth Are Healthy!

**Believe it or not, this is the first and best way to protect your child from tooth decay. Did you know that:**

- Your child can get cavities from the germs in your mouth!
- You can spread these germs to your child with your saliva.

**These tips can help protect your teeth and your child's teeth:**

- Get the dental care you need if you have cavities.
- Never share your child's spoon and fork.
- Don't chew your baby's food or taste the food before feeding the baby.
- Clean your baby's pacifier with water, not by licking it.



## For Healthy Teeth, Feed Your Child Healthy Foods

**Give your child a variety of foods from all the food groups.**

- Offer your child healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, cheese, yogurt and unsweetened cereal.
- Sweet foods like candies, cake, cookies, pastries, gelatin, donuts and baby desserts are OK once in a while, but not every day.

**When your child is thirsty, offer water.**

- One small serving of juice every day is enough.
- Sweet drinks like soda and Kool-Aid® are OK once in a while, but not every day.

Brush your child's teeth after he or she eats foods that stick to the teeth, like crackers, peanut butter and soft bread.

If foods with sugar remain on your baby's teeth, tooth decay is more likely to occur.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Protect Your Baby's Teeth From Birth To 1 Year Old

**Most babies get their first teeth at around 6 months. But it's a good idea to protect your baby from the start. Here's how:**

- Breastfeed your baby.
- Put your baby to sleep without a bottle.
- Begin giving your baby a cup around 6 months of age.
- Take care of your own teeth.
- Visit the dentist yourself.

**Wipe or brush your baby's gums and teeth every day, especially after eating.**

- Use a clean washcloth or a moist, soft child's toothbrush.
- Do not use toothpaste.



## Protect Your Baby's Teeth From Birth To 1 Year Old

**When your baby is 6 months old:**

- Let your baby drink from a cup.
- Don't let your baby use a bottle after 12 months.
- Ask your doctor or dentist about fluoride to protect your baby's teeth.

**Check your baby's teeth and gums for early tooth decay:**

- Lay your baby's head on your lap and lift the upper lip.
- Look at the front and back of your baby's teeth.
- Look for white, brown or black spots on your baby's teeth.
- Check the gums for swelling, bleeding and pimples.
- If you see any spots, take your baby to the dentist right away.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Starting At Age 1, Take Your Baby To The Dentist

- Take your child to a children's dentist or your family dentist.
- If you don't have a dentist, look in your local phone book for your local dental society or call the California Dental Association (800) CDA-SMILE or the California Society of Pediatric Dentists (800) 503-9780.
- Call your local Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) at your local health department.
- If you have Healthy Families, call your plan dentist.
- If you have Medi-Cal, call (800) 322-6384.



## Protect Your Baby's Teeth From 1 To 2 Years Old

### Here's how:

- Stop bottle-feeding, use training cups.
- Give your baby healthy snacks between meals, not sweet ones.
- When your child is thirsty, offer water.
- Clean your baby's gums and teeth with a washcloth or soft toothbrush without toothpaste.
- Check every week for early signs of tooth decay.
- If you see any white, brown or black spots, take your child to the dentist right away.
- Take your child to the dentist at least once a year.

# Your Healthy Baby



## When Your Child Is 2 To 3 Years Old

### Remember these helpful hints:

- Brush your child's teeth twice a day, especially before bedtime.
- Ask your doctor or dentist about fluoride toothpaste when your child is about 2 years old.
- Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Teach your child to spit out the toothpaste after brushing.
- Don't let your child swallow or eat toothpaste.
- Start teaching your child to brush his or her teeth but remember you still need to help.
- Take your child to the dentist at least once a year.



## Protect Your Child's Teeth As He or She Grows Older

### 3 to 5 years:

- Help your child brush twice a day, especially before bedtime, using fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss his or her teeth every day.
- Take your child to the dentist at least once a year.

### Protect your child's teeth with fluoride:

- Fluoride will help make your child's teeth strong and prevent tooth decay.
- Ask your doctor, dentist or clinic about giving your child fluoride drops or tablets if your water is not fluoridated.
- Check with your local health department to find out if your tap water has fluoride in it.



# Your Healthy Baby



## Secondhand Smoke Hurts You And Your Children

Secondhand smoke is especially harmful for your young children. Secondhand smoke is what you breathe when someone smokes around you. A child's lungs are still developing. Breathing secondhand smoke makes your child's lungs less able to fill completely with air. Children who are exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to:

- Get colds and other infections.
- Have ear infections.
- Develop asthma.
- Have allergies.



## Protect Your Children From Tobacco Smoke

**You should not smoke while you are pregnant.**

Ask your partner not to smoke around you while you are pregnant.

- Secondhand smoke is not good for you or your baby.
- You have a greater chance of having a baby who weighs too little.
- Your baby is also at risk for other health problems.

**Secondhand smoke is especially harmful for a newborn.**

- Your baby has very small lungs and airways.
- The airways get smaller when your baby breathes air with smoke in it.
- Smoking can make it hard for the baby to breathe.
- A baby also has a higher chance of dying of SIDS if a mother smokes while she is pregnant or if there are smokers in the home.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Never Smoke Around Pregnant Women And Children

- Ask people not to smoke in your home. This includes baby-sitters, caregivers, friends and family.
- Ask smokers to go outside while they smoke.
- Don't smoke in your car.
- Don't let others smoke in your car.
- Make sure your child care, school and other places your children go are smoke-free.
- Help people who are trying to quit smoking.

Call the California Smoker's Helpline at **(800) NO-BUTTS** to get help quitting for yourself or someone you love.

## What Is SIDS?

**SIDS is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.** SIDS is also known as "crib death." About 2,500 babies die of SIDS every year.

- It is the sudden and unexplained death of a baby under one year of age.
- There is no way to tell when SIDS will happen.

There is also no way to totally prevent SIDS but there are ways to reduce your child's risk for SIDS.



# Your Healthy Baby



## You Can Help Protect Your Baby From SIDS

### Put your baby to sleep on his or her back.

- Your baby should always sleep on his or her back at night and for naps. Studies show that the risk of SIDS is lower when babies are put to sleep on their backs instead of their stomachs.
- Some parents worry their baby may choke or spit-up. Sleeping on the back does NOT cause choking.
- Some babies do not like to sleep on their backs at first. Most get used to it. This is the best way for your baby to sleep.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have questions.

### Do not allow smoking around your baby.

SIDS happens more often to babies who are around smokers.

- Do not smoke while you are pregnant.
- After your baby is born, make sure no one smokes around your baby.

Smoke is not good for your baby. Babies who are around smoke have more colds and other illnesses.

## You Can Help Protect Your Baby From SIDS

### Make sure your baby's bedding is safe.

- Make sure that your baby sleeps on a firm mattress.
- Don't use fluffy blankets or comforters under your baby.
- Dress your baby in a sleeper instead of using blankets.
- Do not cover your baby's face or head with a blanket.
- Don't let your baby sleep on a waterbed, sheepskin, a pillow or other soft materials.
- Don't place things such as soft stuffed toys, pillows or bumper pads in the crib with your baby.



### Keep your baby warm, not hot.

- Dress your baby with the same amount of clothing that you are wearing.
- Keep your baby's room warm so that it feels comfortable to you.

### Breastfeeding may reduce the risk of SIDS.

- Breastfeeding your baby is the best choice.
- Breastfed babies are healthier.

# Your Healthy Baby



## Protect Your Child From Too Much Sun

Childhood sunburns can increase your child's risk of developing skin cancer as an adult. Here are some tips for sun protection:

- Keep infants out of the sun.
- Cover up your child with tightly woven, loose fitting clothing.
- You and your child should wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Choose a stroller with a hood.
- Use sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Apply to your child's skin one-half hour before going outdoors.
- Try to stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun rays are the strongest.
- Find shade from trees, buildings and umbrellas.



## Where You Can Find Help

Have more questions about your **child's shots**?  
Check the local phone book and call  
your local Health Department.

Wonder where to find a **dentist**? Call Denti-Cal **(800) 336-8478**.

Call the dental society in your local phone book;  
Call the California Dental Association  
**(800) CDA-SMILE;**  
**(800) 232-7645** or

Call the California Society of Pediatric Dentists **(800) 503-9780**.

Interested in learning more about the **Healthy Families** health  
insurance program? Call **(800) 880-5305**.

Have questions about **Medi-Cal**? Call **(888) 747-1222**.

Want to know more about **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**?  
Call **(888) 942-9675**.

Want to **quit smoking**? Call the California Smoker's Helpline  
**(800) NO-BUTTS;**  
**(800) 662-8887**.

Want to find out more about **SIDS**? Call the California SIDS  
Program at **(800) 369-SIDS; (800) 369-7437** Or call the  
Back to Sleep Campaign, **(800) 505-2742**.

Brought to you by the California Children and Families Commission.  
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For more information, please call **(800) KIDS-025**.

